

Washington Park Arboretum ~~HISTORIC~~

BULLETIN



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The Washington Park Arboretum is managed cooperatively by the University of Washington Botanic Gardens and Seattle Parks and Recreation; the Arboretum Foundation is its major support organization.

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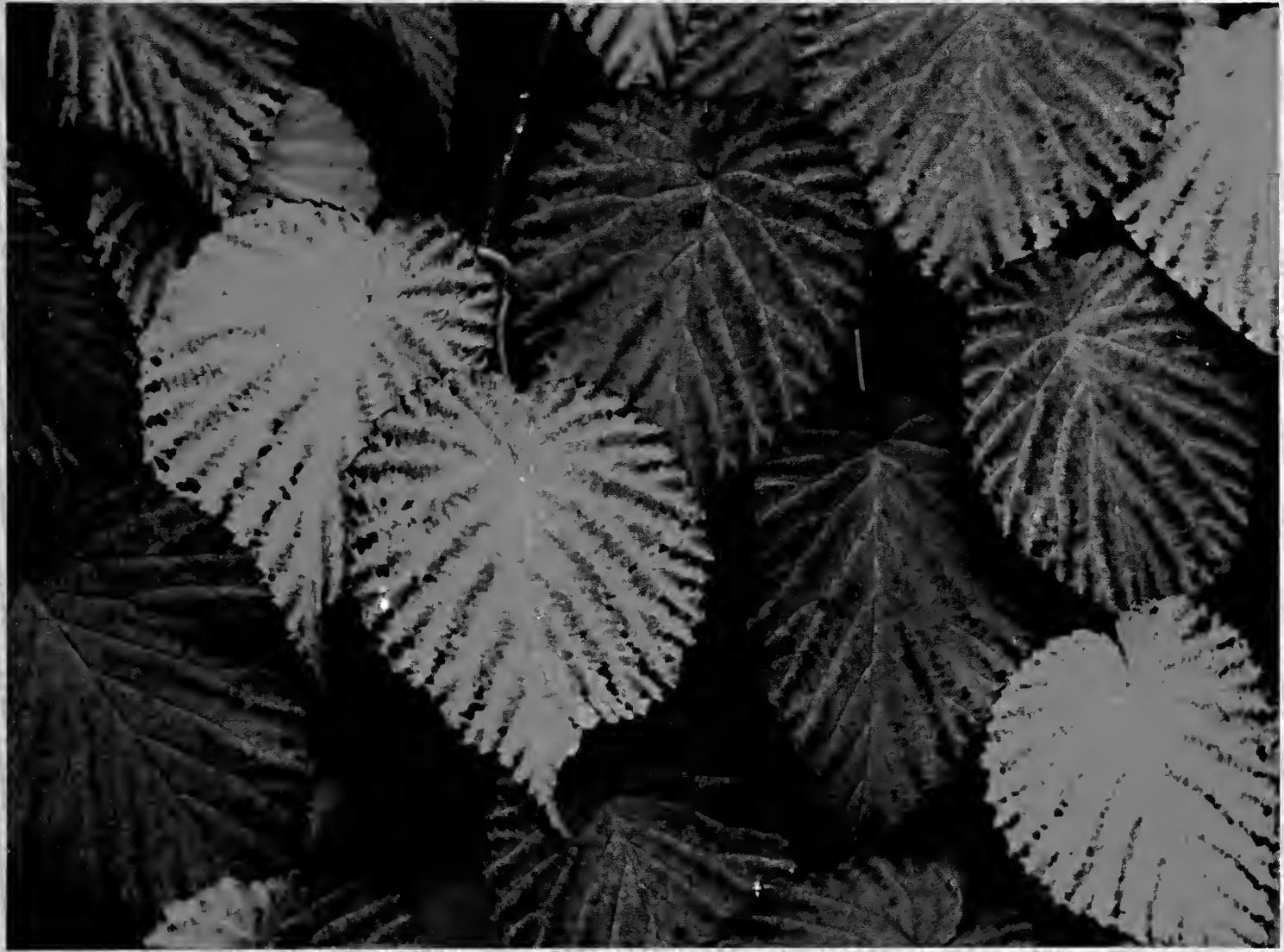
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ABOVE: The turning leaves of *Davidia involucrata*, as photographed by Joy Spurr, appeared in the Fall 2001 issue of the “Bulletin.” Read Lee C. Neff’s tribute to Joy’s work for the “Bulletin” beginning on page 3.

ON THE COVER: Wildflowers flourish from late spring through early autumn in mountain meadows and foothills throughout Washington state; here a cliff paintbrush (*Castilleja rupicola*) appears on the Iron Horse Trail near Twin Falls State Park. (Photograph by Richard Droker)

Protecting the Arboretum: Advocacy on the SR520 Bridge Project

When I joined the Arboretum staff three years ago, I was asked to take on a big job: leading our efforts to persuade the region's decision-makers to come up with a better plan for the new SR520 Bridge—one that would make protecting the Arboretum a higher priority. The Board made it clear from the very beginning that nothing the Foundation could do on behalf of the Arboretum would be more important than working to reduce the harm that the bridge would do. And (radical thought), perhaps the new bridge could even do things to make the Arboretum better! Our goal seemed like a long shot...but absolutely worth fighting for.

Well, it certainly has taken endless hours of public meetings; strategy sessions; meetings with the Governor, the Speaker of the House, the Mayor of Seattle and many other officials; written report analysis; public appearances; e-blast alerts and more. The great team of Board members on our SR520 committee (our Chair Susan Black, Kathleen Pierce, Cheryl dos Remedios and Barbara Wright) and our public policy consultant Nancy Belcher analyzed the state's proposed plans and drafted detailed comments on what was wrong with the plans and what needed to be changed. Our lawyer, Tom Backer, gave us great advice—pro bono. And, we worked in tandem with our partners at the University of Washington Botanic Gardens and Seattle Parks to convey a coordinated message on what was most needed to protect the Arboretum.

After all of that work, our core messages were quite simple: Get rid of the ramps in the Arboretum, reduce the traffic on Lake

Washington Boulevard, keep the roadway on Foster Island as low and narrow as possible (consistent with making it ready for light rail at some time in the future), reduce the noise and visual blight, make good pedestrian and bike connections, and pay mitigation for whatever impacts are unavoidable. I thought our points were compelling, but I didn't know if we could impact the decision.

So, I was surprised and encouraged to see how much the plans had improved when Governor Gregoire announced the "Preferred Alternative": no ramps in the Arboretum, reduced traffic on the Boulevard, changes to accommodate light rail in the future, quieter pavement across Foster Island to reduce noise, and better bike and pedestrian pathways. There are many details to hammer out, though, and much to do over the summer and fall to make sure that the improved plan is what is actually built.

Thank you to all of you who spoke up on behalf of the Arboretum. Please continue to stay engaged until the decision is final. And, then, maybe we will all be able celebrate and say, "Hurrah, our collective voices have been heard!" ~

Cheers to you all,



Paige Miller, Executive Director,
Arboretum Foundation



Joy Spurr, Photography (Unless Otherwise Noted)

BY LEE C. NEFF

*B*etween 2001 and 2010, every issue of the "Bulletin" included these words: "Joy Spurr, Photography (unless otherwise noted)." In fact, they may be included in issues for some time to come, for Joy's images of plants and scenes in Washington Park Arboretum are among her most significant, enduring legacies.

A native of Minnesota, Joy Spurr died on December 16, 2009, after having lived in the Seattle area since 1940. She was extraordi-

nary—she traveled widely, skied, hiked, gardened, collected and documented. For years, she took photographs of mushrooms, plants and myriad wildlife, and captured images ranging from vast vistas to the smallest details on magenta berries.

Little did I realize, when I first became editor of the "Bulletin," that the tiny key to the file cabinet in the Visitors Center office that contains Joy's slides would be one of my most treasured resources. For each issue, I

ABOVE: Joy Spurr's image of *Magnolia sinensis* was featured on the cover of the Spring 2007 issue of the "Bulletin."



spent hours hunched over a light box, trying to decide which of her beautiful images best captured a particular season or specific species. There were always more choices than there was space to use them.

The photograph of the Arboretum's footbridge, which we selected for the Summer 2001 issue of the "Bulletin," is a fine example of her art. Every corner of the image is clear; one can feel the velvety texture of the moss. Who would not want to stroll over this beautiful bridge and visit Seattle's remarkable Arboretum?

In the Fall 2001 issue we featured a collection of Joy's images of autumn in the Arboretum.

My favorite is the photograph of the leaves of the dove tree (*Davida involucrata*). Joy captured every vein and each toothed leaf edge as the leaves turned from green to golden yellow (see page 1).

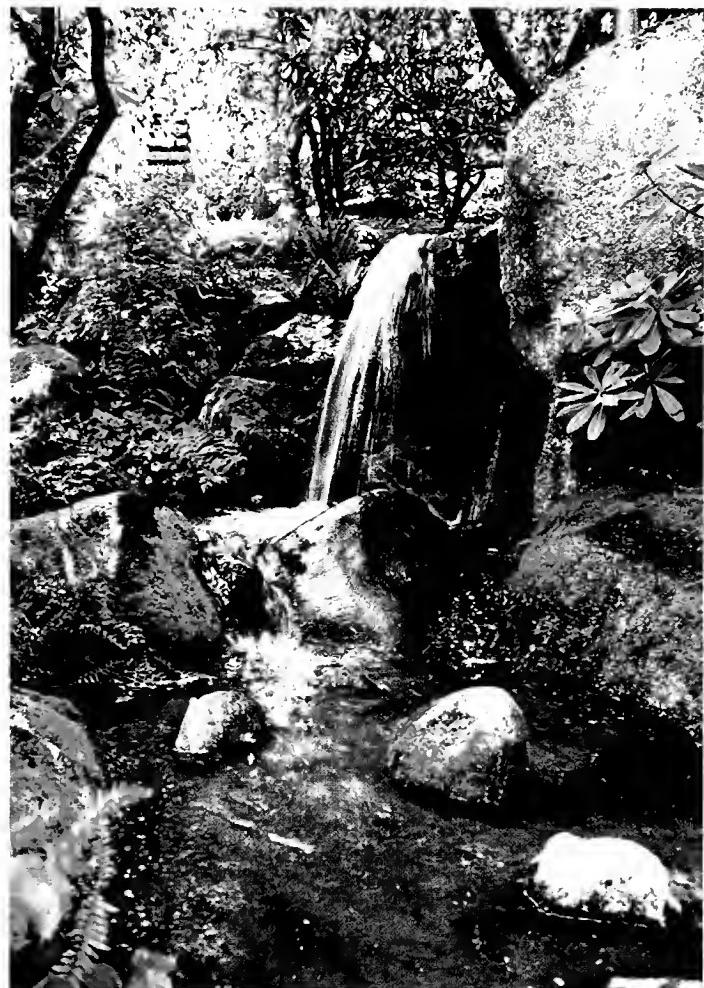
Accompanying the photographs was a tribute to Joy written by former "Bulletin" editor Jan Silver. Jan began by stating, "It would take the Hubble telescope's cameras to capture all of Joy Spurr's stellar photographic gifts to Washington Park Arboretum." They are, like the stars, uncountable.

Other special images include the ice-encased fruit of a Japanese beautyberry



(*Callicarpa japonica*) in the Winter 2002 issue and the photograph of the waterfall in the Japanese Garden, featured on the cover of the Spring 2006 issue. Joy's eye has captured even the sound of the water falling on the rocks!

We are fortunate that Joy gave so many significant photographs to the Arboretum Foundation. We can also rest during our tours of the Arboretum's grounds and contemplate the beauty around us because Joy contributed three benches to the Arboretum. Two of them honor Arboretum Units 32 and 81. The third bench was given



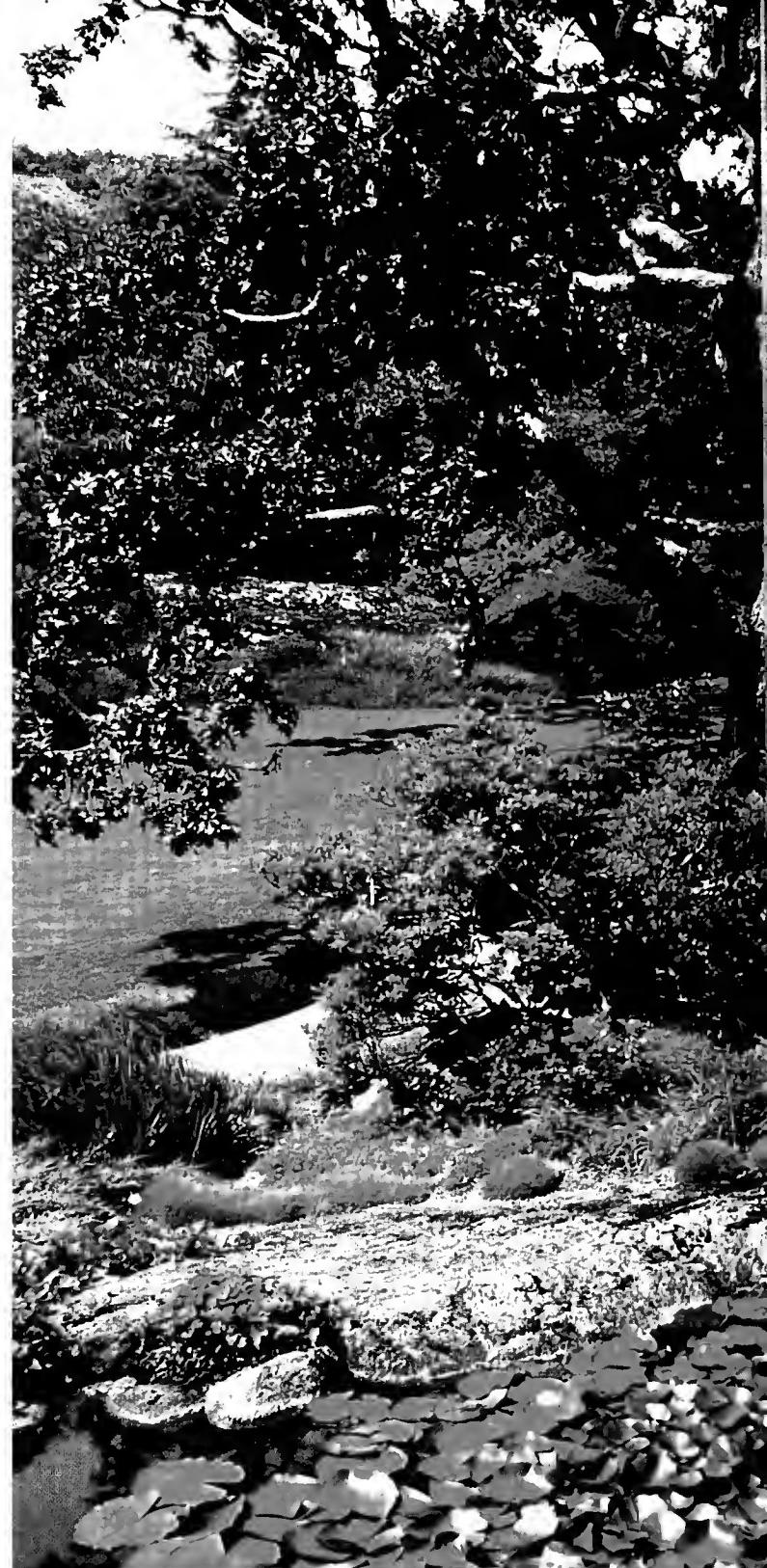
in memory of her husband, Roger. Joy was generous in many ways.

As Jan Silver wrote, "We are all privileged to see through the eyes of this remarkable woman..." Joy's vision continues to teach us to look more closely, to appreciate more fully, to enjoy more often, and to learn from what we see. ~

LEE C. NEFF was privileged to know Joy Spurr and very much appreciated using her photographs while serving as editor of the "Bulletin," 2001-2007.



ABOVE: Victoria woodworker Phil Testemale made a bench from a Garry oak reclaimed from the garden. **BELLOW:** The semi-hardy Mexican shell flower (*Tigridia pavonia*) appears in underplantings in the Rhododendron Woodland Garden.



Love, War, Separation, Reunion: The Story of the Abkhazi Garden

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY JANINE ANDERSON

This article is one in a series on places of botanical interest worth visiting while on the road or on the go

Butchart Gardens is arguably the top tourist attraction in Victoria, B.C. Less well known, but worth seeking out, is the Abkhazi Garden, a diminutive jewel of about an acre in size. The Abkhazi

Garden is notable not only for its stunning landscape and plantings, but also for the haunting twists of fate that led to its creation.

Located in Victoria's Fairfield neighborhood about 2.5 miles east of downtown, the



Abkhazi Garden somehow seems much larger than an acre, possibly owing to its varied topography, towering canopy of native Garry oak (*Quercus garryana*), modernist elements, carefully framed views and enclosed setting.

A Garden Is a Story

Like all gardens, the Abkhazi Garden is more than an impressive collection of plants in a beautiful setting: It is also a story.

The story of the Abkhazi Garden begins

in Paris in the 1920s, when Marjorie (Peggy) Pemberton-Carter met Nicholas Abkhazi. Nicholas was an exiled Georgian prince, and Peggy had been orphaned at three and adopted by a wealthy English couple. Peggy and Nicholas's friendship was nurtured through correspondence and the occasional visits Peggy made to Paris from her home in Shanghai, China.

The two lost contact when both were interned in prisoner-of-war camps during

ABOVE: Views from the East Path take in sculpted trunks of Garry oak, a pond set in glaciated rock, and the summerhouse.

World War II, Nicholas in Germany and Peggy near Shanghai. After her release, Peggy booked passage to San Francisco, paid for with traveler's checks that she had kept hidden while imprisoned. From San Francisco, Peggy went to Victoria in December 1945 to visit friends and recuperate.

Having heard that in Victoria one could be as eccentric as one wanted to be, Peggy decided to settle there. In March 1946 Peggy used the money from the sale of her property in Shanghai to purchase a large lot in Victoria. She hired landscapers to begin clearing the treed and rocky property and commissioned an architect to design a summerhouse. By the fall of 1946 the land was fenced, the summerhouse was built, and lawns and fruit trees were planted.

Peggy had had no news of Nicholas for years and did not even know if he was alive. Then she received a letter from him in January 1946. They were reunited in the fall in New York—their first meeting in 13 years—and were married in Victoria in November 1946. The couple settled in Victoria and continued developing the property. They maintained and improved the garden throughout their lives together.

The Garden Today

The entrance to the garden is on Fairfield Road and largely hidden from the street. Visitors move from south to north through the garden, which is twice as long on that axis as it is wide. Peggy Abkhazi likened their garden to a Chinese scroll that unrolls before one, gradually revealing its sequence of views, mood and character. It has several distinct garden rooms, including the Rhododendron Woodland Garden at the entrance, an exposed slope of rock outcroppings featuring mature conifers, the Abkhazis' former home, and views of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Olympic Mountains.

Rhododendron Woodland Garden

Here, native Garry oaks provide a sheltering canopy for species and hybrid

rhododendrons, some of which were 50 years old when planted in the garden. The gnarled trunks of these arboreal giants resemble rhododendron trunks in Loderi Valley at the Washington Park Arboretum. Among the woodland underplantings of special summer interest are the giant Himalayan lily (*Cardiocrinum giganteum*), yellow waxbells (*Kirengeshoma palmata*), *Triosteum pinnatifidum*, and Mexican shell flower (*Tigridia pavonia*), in addition to a collection of unique ferns and hostas.

The South Lawn

Visitors leave behind the shade of the rhododendron woodland as they emerge onto the sunny south lawn. The original hornbeam hedge provides a dramatic dark backdrop to a collection of silver-foliaged plants that complement the nearby rock outcroppings. Other plants in this border were chosen for foliage form and texture. A fifty-foot sweep of African blue lily (*Agapanthus campanulatus* 'Mosswood Hybrids'), developed in Victoria by nurseryman Ron Pal and hardy to USDA Zone 7, edges the border and enhances flow through the garden.

The path leading from the south lawn provides views up toward rock outcroppings. The garden was designed to capitalize on its natural assets—glaciated rocky slopes, magnificent Garry oaks and gorgeous vistas. The garden flows around the rocks. Deeper pockets are planted with conifers, Japanese maples and mature rhododendrons. Naturalized bulbs, choice alpines and woodland companions carpet other areas, providing a seamless tapestry of texture and color.

Yangzi River Area

Beyond the South Lawn, the garden continues north along a heather-lined path and lawn at the base of an immense rock outcropping. Peggy Abkhazi likened this image to the landscape of the Yangzi River near her former home in Shanghai. This area also affords good

views of the Abkhazis' former residence, a stunning example of West Coast design (see below). Detours from the path enable exploration of three ponds created from natural depressions in the rock. The pools reflect the sky and nearby plantings and provide homes for turtles and ducks.

The Summerhouse

The summerhouse, designed by John Wade, a young Victoria architect and protégé of the California-based modernist architect Richard Neutra, was the first building constructed on the property. Completed in the summer of 1946 and fully restored in 2002, it is a small gem of modernist architecture. The Abkhazis used it for shelter and meals while developing the garden and building their home. It provides a splendid vantage point from which to view the garden. What a pleasure it must have been to wake there, step out onto the terrace, and look out over the garden.

East Path

After passing the summerhouse, the path climbs to the northeast corner of the property. The plantings, including mature conifers, flow down and around the glaciated rock, hugging it in a very natural way. The views from the top of the path encompass not only the garden but also the wider landscape beyond, including the Sooke Hills, Strait of Juan de Fuca and Olympic Range.

House and Terrace

The Abkhazi house was built in 1947 and designed by John Wade, the same modernist architect who designed the summerhouse. The house was a departure from the traditional architecture of the area and era. It was constructed simply of wood and stone and used products that were modern at the time, such as birch plywood, in-floor radiant heating, and a vaulted ceiling with acoustic tile. The Abkhazis lived in the house for more than 40 years. The former sitting room

is now a restaurant that overlooks the garden. In addition to the restaurant, the house contains a gift shop, restrooms, plant displays, exhibits and archival photographs. The surrounding terrace of set sandstone blends with the natural rock outcroppings on which the house sits.

The Years Between

The Abkhazis worked on the garden for over 40 years and considered it "their child." Each had come from a background of wealth and privilege, and their tastes were refined, sharing an appreciation for music, literature and art. Their garden became the focus of their own creative energy. Honoring the inherent beauty of their site, they explored its possibilities through a process of experimentation and constant refinement. They chose plants that would enhance its natural beauty—seeking out, under the tutelage of Victoria's most distinguished horticulturalists, the best available from the finest nurseries.

Nicholas died in 1987, and Peggy remained in their home for the next two years. Following her death in 1994, at age 92, the garden changed hands several times and was eventually purchased by The Land Conservancy of British Columbia in 2000, after a successful campaign to rescue it from becoming a townhome development.

The ashes of Nicholas and Peggy rest at the base of a rock at the north end of the South Lawn. Peggy requested that instead of shedding tears, visitors drink champagne to celebrate her reunion with Nicholas.

Although the Abkhazis have died, the story of their garden lives on. The Abkhazi Garden changes over time as improvements are made. An adjacent parcel of land has been purchased and returned to the original garden, new driveway access and staff parking have been installed, and a new compost/utility area has been created behind the gates. Eventually, new plantings will be added and other renovations completed.



ABOVE: Views from the terrace of the summerhouse take in an expanse of garden to the south. **RIGHT:** Victoria architect John Wade designed the summerhouse, which provided the Abkhazis with shelter during their years of developing the garden.



To Visit

The Abkhazi Garden is located at 1964 Fairfield Road in Victoria. It is open seven days a week from March 1 to October 31. Hours are 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (last admission). The restaurant is open from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for lunch and from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. for tea and desserts. The Shop in the Garden is open from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The restaurant offers a seasonal menu of contemporary dishes featuring locally grown ingredients. The Shop in the Garden offers unique gifts, original artwork, plants and books of interest to gardeners. Two biographies about Peggy and Nicholas Abkhazi—"A Curious Cage," based on a secret diary Peggy kept of her war experiences, and "A Curious Life," by Katherine Gordon—also are available in the shop.

Spring and summer admission fees are \$10 for adults and \$7.50 for students and seniors. Children under 12 are free. Group rates are

available but must be arranged in advance. Admission is \$1 off if you arrive by foot or bus. All fees are in Canadian currency.

Directions and more information can be found on The Land Conservancy Web site (blog.conservancy.bc.ca/). Click on "Properties," then "Vancouver Island Region." ~

JANINE ANDERSON, CPH, is a landscape designer (www.anderson-design.net), long-time Arboretum guide, and member of the "Bulletin" Editorial Board. In addition to personal observations during a summer visit to the Abkhazi Garden, sources for this article include information contained in the garden's walking-tour brochure and material found on the Web site of The Land Conservancy.



The Restoration Garden

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY NIALL DUNNE

*I*t's a cold, wet, November morning, and I'm working with a crew of volunteers at a natural area close to the town of Black Diamond, Washington—digging up snowberries (*Symporicarpos albus*), sword ferns (*Polystichum munitum*), vine maples (*Acer circinatum*) and other plants, wrapping them in burlap sacks, and loading them onto a big truck. The land is private property slated for clearing and development; the native plants we're uprooting are being salvaged by King County for use in local stream-shading, erosion-prevention and habitat-restoration projects. It's not the most cheerful

work, dealing out death and judgment in a soon-to-be-destroyed forest—"Yes, I'll rescue you...no, sorry, you'll have to fight it out with Chuck E. Cheese." But at least there's consolation in the fact that some of these plants, and their genetic uniqueness, will be preserved elsewhere for future generations.

For most participants, volunteering at a native-plant salvage is not a completely altruistic exercise. When you volunteer, you're usually allowed some time at the end of the workday to dig up plants for your own personal or professional use. That's what got habitat restoration gardener Tom Erler out of bed this

ABOVE: A budding *Fritillaria affinis* surrounded by wood strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*).

morning. Tom, who runs the small design firm Sound Corridor Cultivation, is here to acquire free plants for a garden that he's creating at a private residence in Sammamish, about a half-hour's drive away. He's even brought his client Narayana Granatelli and her husband, Andy Olney, along to experience the salvage, learn more about the plight of many of our dwindling native plant communities, and help gather plant material.

As soon as the county employees signal the end of the work shift, the volunteers fan out and start to take the plants they want for themselves. Tom races over to a patch of near-dormant vanilla leaf (*Achlys triphylla*) and lovingly digs up the rhizomes. He points out a delicate young wood fern (*Dryopteris expansa*) and tells me to get busy. For the next two hours, he, Narayana, Andy, and I work as a team to salvage all sorts of botanical treasures—including red huckleberries

Nurse stump in the Gulick back garden planted with a mix of native species, including bunchberry (*Cornus canadensis*), salal (*Gaultheria shallon*), red huckleberry (*Vaccinium parvifolium*), licorice fern (*Polypodium glycyrrhiza*) and twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*).



(*Vaccinium parvifolium*), sedges (*Carex species*) and starflowers (*Trientalis borealis*)—and stow them in the back of Tom's pickup.

Later on, at Narayana's house, we unload the plants into the front yard, which Tom has already mostly cleared of its vegetation—mainly weedy perennials such as bluebells and stinky Bob. Two large Douglas fir trees dominate the yard and will provide shade for a new understory comprised of the refugees from our Black Diamond salvage plus other natives that Tom has purchased from trusted local sources. With Narayana's blessing, Tom's goal is to reassemble components of the original vegetation on the site and create a pleasurable landscape that also functions as a habitat for native birds, insects and other wildlife. On a larger scale, Tom hopes the garden will act as a steppingstone allowing native flora and fauna to move among green spaces, such as nearby parks and wild areas, which have been fragmented from each other by urban expansion.

Ecological Restoration for Urban Gardeners

Restoration gardening is native plant cultivation taken to a whole other level. It combines conventional garden design with the principles and practices of ecological restoration—defined by the Society for Ecological Restoration as “the process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed.” Restoration scientists and practitioners attempt to return disturbed ecosystems to their historical trajectories, or in other words, to their original state of development prior to the arrival of the “Big, Bad White Man.” (No, not Rush Limbaugh...Christopher Columbus!) This is often impossible in urban areas, given the severity of damage inflicted on many ecosystems. So here the goal is often more modest: to restore key ecological processes—such as photosynthesis, decomposition, nutrient cycling, pollination and seed dispersal—to an acceptable degree, while remaining as faithful as possible to the pre-existing habitat structure and species composition.



ABOVE: Indian plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*) seedling volunteering in the restoration garden.

RIGHT: Tom Erler identifying an Indian plum at Thornton Creek Park, the reference site for the Gulick restoration garden.



Restoration ecologists usually work on relatively large-scale ecosystems, such as stream corridors, wetlands and forests. Restoration gardeners focus primarily on the small-scale ecosystem of the home garden—though with the hope that if enough private gardens become refugia for native biodiversity, they will have a significant conservation impact on a landscape level. In “Landscaping Ideas of Jays,” restoration gardener and guru Judith Larner Lowry writes, “In my mind, a landscape emerges where each hill, each flat, each slope regains some approximation of the unique vegetation that it once possessed, in a new arrangement that encompasses but is not overwhelmed by modern realities of house, car, and human populations.”

More Than Just Native Plant Gardening

So how does restoration gardening differ from the traditional use of native plants in the garden? Well, restoration gardeners don’t just plant any old native, willy-nilly. *Cornus florida*

is a beautiful native dogwood from the eastern U.S., but you won’t find it in a restoration garden in the Pacific Northwest. Think of restoration gardeners as the locavores of the horticulture world. Their focus is very much on preserving and enhancing the gene pool of local native vegetation and the native fauna it supports. The focus is also on rebuilding communities of plants: Species are combined together in the garden based on their co-occurrence in nature rather than on purely aesthetic criteria. (Planting diverse natural communities is the most effective way to welcome native wildlife into your garden.)

The process of planning a garden is also somewhat different. As with any form of sustainable horticulture, restoration gardening places a strong emphasis on site specificity—planting the right plant in the right place. But it’s also about looking outward to connect with the wider landscape. “The gardener seeks to gain as great an understanding as possible of the land both within and beyond the fence, an

understanding that is continually applied to the planning and planting of the garden,” writes Lowry in “Gardening with a Wild Heart.”

After a basic site analysis, restoration gardeners don’t consult seed catalogs or glossy magazines for inspiration. They first take an inventory of the native plants already growing in a yard—paying special attention to those plants that appear to have arrived spontaneously, without human intervention. Then they visit nearby nature preserves to see what native plants grow there and what kind of associations these plants form. They also consult historical literature and floras (i.e. published lists of plants and plant communities known to be, or to have been, indigenous to a particular area). Finally, they take all this information and use it as a reference upon which to model their garden designs and measure the success of the restoration.

Two Ways to Do Restoration

There are two main strategies in both ecological restoration and restoration gardening. The first and simplest is to remove sources of artificial disturbance—such as a dam on a river—and then allow for the independent recovery of ecological processes. In the case of a garden, this typically involves removing weeds or exotic plants that provide little or no wildlife benefits, remediating the soil (if necessary), and waiting to see what kind of native plant material seeds in from the surrounding landscape. (Weeding out any invasives or undesirable exotics that volunteer on the site following the initial clearing is also important.)

“I like the idea of stepping back and letting natural forces—different types of seed dispersal, small-scale natural disturbances (such as a fallen tree), and so on—act upon the land,” says Tom Erler. “It lessens the degree to which I’m imposing my ideas about design, and makes for a more natural and dynamic garden that’s full of interest and surprises. Of course, some plants will need help. For example, if there’s a fescue, salmonberry or Douglas fir seedling

coming up in a pathway, I’ll transplant it to a more favorable location on-site.”

This kind of garden creation takes time, says Tom. “Mimicking the process of succession in nature,” he explains, “the herb layer is generally the first to take off, with shrubs coming on in three to five years, depending on the existing conditions. Trees will eventually take over, but it’s unlikely that you’ll ever see the garden developing by itself into a climax forest, such as a western hemlock community: Urban landscapes have been so altered and destabilized, that there is very little late-successional presence left to facilitate the transition.”

Perhaps understandably, most homeowners (not to mention restoration practitioners) don’t have the patience for this sort of hands-off, wait-and-see approach, which brings us to our second restoration strategy—one that yields immediate results: the deliberate reintroduction of native plants. But not just any old natives belched out of Burpee or purchased at Home Depot! Ideally, the plant material should be of local provenance—propagated from seeds or cuttings collected (legally) nearby, purchased from a local, native-plant nursery that can identify its seed sources, or rescued in a plant salvage.

Design Tips for the Restoration Garden

When using plant material, restoration gardeners can differ in their design approaches. In “Gardening with a Wild Heart,” Lowry outlines a number of design guidelines that she uses. Two of these I’ve mentioned already:

1) Use the native plant communities in nearby natural areas as models for your design, and

2) Remove or control non-native weeds.

Here is a quick summary of some of her other guidelines:

3) Design with a limited number of species. Lowry recommends choosing a keynote plant species, such as a shrub that provides shelter and food to an array of wildlife, and planting it throughout the garden to give the design some bones. In her words,



Deer fern (*Blechnum spicant*), star-flowered false Solomon's seal (*Maianthemum stellatum*), western starflower (*Trientalis latifolia*), trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera ciliosa*), and wood strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*) in Paul Gulick's back yard.

"The eye seeks repetition, while variation maintains interest. Give the eye a strong message through repetition, as nature does." Using fewer plants also brings you into more contact with these plants and deepens your appreciation and understanding of them.

4) Use natural models of spatial distribution and vegetation architecture: In other words, avoid uniformity in the placement and arrangement of your plants. Don't plonk everything down in even, geometric patterns: Create an interesting mosaic by mixing symmetry and asymmetry into your design.

5) Celebrate the unpredictability of plants. Don't think of plants as static design elements and gardening as a means of achieving total control over nature. Plants are unpredictable: They rarely grow the way that's advertised in books. Instead of fighting this fact, turn it to your advantage and create a more natural, dynamic design. When a random native seedling comes in, it's a cause for

celebration rather than horror because reproduction is an indicator that natural processes are reviving. (Lowry claims that six out of the nine coast live oaks in her California garden were planted by western scrub jays!)

6) Vary your plant-care strategies. A restoration garden isn't necessarily a "wild" garden. It's fine to groom and prune your plants, at least the ones that are close to your house. As you move towards the periphery of the garden, allow nature to reign and create a design based more on natural processes and relationships.

Other strategies include creating habitat for a whole suite of species rather than just one particular animal or guild (e.g. butterflies). You can do this by following guideline number one—that is by replicating natural plant associations.

Natives Are the New Exotics!

Tom Erler's work has been greatly influ-

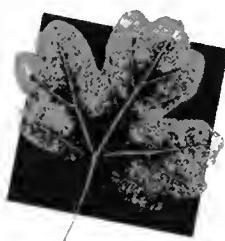
enced by Lowry, but there are some things he does differently. "Lowry starts with a simple palette of plant material," says Tom, "but I prefer to maximize site-specific diversity and see what takes hold. I plant at all stages of succession. Primary successionalists, such as herbs and groundcovers, are useful for weed suppression early on, whereas late-successionalists, like shrubs and trees, provide more structure and depth to a garden. A mixture of them all provides lots of diverse food sources and habitat. That said, I also have to take the client's needs into account. For instance, Narayana has a leach field near where we are working, so we're mostly limited to using plants with shallower, less-aggressive root structures. No cedars!"

In early spring, Tom takes me on a trip to see a restoration garden that he created a year and a half ago in a private home in the Northgate neighborhood of Seattle. In its previous incarnation, the garden looked like any other garden on the block: a judicious

blend of conventional ornamentals, specimen natives and weeds. Now it looks quite unique. Though still relatively immature, it has a subtle, almost strange, beauty. (After all, as Lowry has said, natives—many of them novelties to most gardeners—are the new exotics!)

In the exposed, sandy-soiled front yard, Tom had cleared away most of the existing plants, laid down a few inches of arborist mulch, and seeded in a couple of low-growing annual wildflowers—maiden blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia parviflora*) and grand collomia (*Collomia grandiflora*)—which are native to lightly wooded areas in the Pacific Northwest. When we arrive, the *Collinsia* is already in bloom and forms a shimmering blue tapestry woven between the rising stems of the *Collomia*, which will soon overtake the *Collinsia* and produce a lovely salmon-yellow, phlox-like inflorescence. A row of young vine maples and snowberries planted along the front sidewalk will eventually form a gentle screen for the yard.

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Around the side of the house, on a metal trellis, Tom has replaced a *Photinia* with black-cap raspberry (*Rubus leucodermis*), an underused native raspberry that performs just as well when trained as a vine as it does pruned into a shrub. Nearby is a stunning cascara (*Rhamnus purshiana*) that Tom rescued in a plant salvage. This is underplanted with native ferns, trilliums, and *Claytonia sibirica*. The backyard is shaded by a number of mature broadleaf and evergreen trees. In the understory, we find a variety of native ferns, piggy-back plant (*Tolmiea menziesii*) used as weed-suppressing ground-cover, wild ginger (*Asarum caudatum*) in flower, a budding *Fritillaria affinis*, star-flowered false Solomon's seal (*Maianthemum stellatum*), thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*) and much more. Red-flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*) and Indian plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*) have appeared spontaneously in the garden, most likely brought in by birds

from nearby Thornton Creek Park, which Tom has used as a reference site.

Fostering Stewardship of the Land

The owner of the home, Paul Gulick, joins us on the tour. He seems very pleased with the way his new native habitat garden is developing. Since hiring Tom to do the restoration, Paul feels he has become much more in tune with what's happening in his local environment. Along with learning about the amazing diversity of native plants that grow in the Pacific Northwest, he has become more aware of the threats they face from development and invasive species.

He also feels like there's much more of a sense of place in his garden now compared to when it was filled with conventional ornamentals, and that it has given him a stronger sense of stewardship over the land. "I find it very soothing to come home from work and look at the garden," says Paul. "It now has a quality of naturalness and belonging it never had before."



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I ask Tom if he thinks one restoration garden can make much of a difference in terms of benefitting native wildlife. He answers, "Absolutely! Even small patches of native vegetation in a city can have an impact. For example, I did a restoration in a small garden about five blocks from downtown Bellevue. Originally, it was a boring, lazy landscape comprised of mostly sod and cherry laurel, and the only birds that would pay a visit were the usual cosmopolitan suspects: crows, robins and starlings. Since the site was cleared and planted with bird-friendly natives—such as serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*), oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*), red-twigs dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), twinberry (*Lonicera involucrata*), honeysuckle (*L. ciliosa*) and lupine (*Lupinus rivularis*)—there's been a slew of activity from native seed and insect foragers, including juncos, western tanagers, flickers and spotted towhees." ~

NIALL DUNNE is a freelance writer and editor, communications manager for the Arboretum Foundation, and a member of the "Bulletin" Editorial Board. His most recent publication is a chapter on sequestering carbon in soil and plants in "The Climate Conscious Gardener" (Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 2010), edited by Janet Marinelli.

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WHERE GRASSLANDS AND WOODLANDS MEET:

The University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY DANIEL MOUNT

No man is an island, I've been told. The same holds true for trees, although I have planted them for clients as individual specimens, or admired a lone, weather-gnarled conifer on a mountain top. But those trees are exceptions. Trees, like people, always exist within a greater context.



ABOVE: The Black Oak Savannah in the Wisconsin Native Plant Garden at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum. INSET: *Forsythia viridissima* 'Kumson'

The founders of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum were well aware of this. The Arboretum was established in 1934 (in the same year as the Washington Park Arboretum); it began as a 500-acre parcel south of Lake Wingra, one of the five lakes sited in Madison. Among the many botanists, horticulturists, civic leaders and citizens involved in the birth of the Arboretum, one man with a particular vision stood out—the naturalist and land ethic proponent Aldo Leopold. Inspired by principles of the then-new science of ecology, Leopold believed the Arboretum should not be a living museum of exotic trees, but rather a “sample of what Dane County looked like when our ancestors arrived here.” Botanist Theodore Sperry’s enthusiasm for restoring the native prairies and oak savannas that had disappeared under the plow, and had been impoverished by over-grazing, also fired him up to search remaining wild places in the state for plants that once had been native to the newly established Arboretum. The first plantings began by 1935; three planting methods were used. Hay containing prairie seed was spread over cleared soil, sections of sod from existing prairies were transplanted, and seed collected from remnant populations in other parts of the state was sown. By 1938, native purple cone flowers (*Echinacea purpurea*) bloomed once again in the 60-acre tract now known as Curtis Prairie.

This singular project, which is considered the oldest prairie restoration site in the world, has long attracted famous visitors. Walt Disney arrived with his cameras in 1953 to film the wildlife documentary “The Vanishing Prairie.” A few years later, Secretary of the Interior Stuart Udall visited and said, “Nowhere in all my travels have I found more encouragement for conservation than in your state.” Despite this early success, Sperry believed it would take “roughly... a thousand years to restore” this damaged prairie.

Yet 60 acres of grasses and forbs do not an Arboretum make. For all the innovative

planning and hard labor by the botanists, ecologists and troops of Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) workers involved in prairie restoration, it was lilacs that attracted the Arboretum’s first visitors.

Lilacs and Crabapples

At the Arboretum’s inception, the University hired a newly trained and enthusiastic horticulturist named G. William Longenecker, whose name today graces the Arboretum’s ornamental collections collectively known as the Longenecker Horticultural Gardens.

Longenecker’s focus was typical of what arboreta were doing at the time. He sought out interesting woody plants that could grow in Zones 4b to 5a—the humid, continental climate of southern Wisconsin. With an average snowfall of 40 inches, winter temperatures dipping below zero degrees Fahrenheit, and humid summer temperatures topping out in the 90s, this is not a climate for Mediterranean natives or the broadleaf evergreens we are so fond of in the Pacific Northwest. Yet, despite these climatic limitations, the Longenecker Horticultural Gardens became the premier woody-plant collection in Wisconsin. According to Edward Hasselkus, the collection’s curator for the last 43 years, there are over 2500 different plants within the Garden’s 35 acres. Its collections include one of the nation’s largest displays of lilacs (*Syringa*) with 275 taxa, one of the country’s most up-to-date collections of crabapples (*Malus*) with 175 taxa, and an important arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis*) collection with over 115 taxa of this variable Wisconsin native. It also includes 16 taxa of one of my personal favorites, the sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), which is the Wisconsin state tree. On a recent visit to the Gardens, I was surprised to see *Daphne x burkwoodii* thriving there, as well as a large colonizing pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) at the northern limit of its native range. I was thrilled to see flocks of wild turkeys feeding on fallen nuts beneath four American chestnuts (*Castanea dentata*),

each over 50 years old, that are free of the blight that devastated stands in the eastern United States early in the last century.

The ornamental collections are beloved by local visitors, particularly in May when the crabapples bloom, and at lilac time when new generations arrive to see some of the original shrubs that drew the Arboretum's first visitors. Still, restoration and ecosystem projects occupy most of the Arboretum's varied land. The original 500 acres grew quickly, with most purchases being made before World War II; today the Arboretum possesses 1260 acres. (There was a small loss of 3.77 acres and 1500 trees to the Department of Transportation in the 1970s, when they put in the Beltline Highway.) The Arboretum's historian, Nancy P. Sachse, states, "From the piecemeal land acquisition, hectic though it often was, came a curious advantage, for this acreage provided more varied terrain and consequently more scientific opportunity than even the most careful planning could have foreseen."

Continuing Restoration Projects

After the successful establishment of the Curtis Prairie, other parts of the Arboretum were considered for restoration; today that terrain hosts 33 restored or created ecological communities, including three additional prairies and two oak savannas. In these prairies and savannas grow the wild ancestors of many popular perennials that inhabit our gardens today. (Often the wild species were exported to Europe, where their cultivars were bred and then re-imported to the American market.) Among many others, native Joe Pye weed (*Eupatorium purpureum*), black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), New England aster (*Sympyotrichum novae-angliae*), spiderwort (*Tradescantia ohiensis*) and gayfeather (*Liatris spicata*) have been favored flowers in the waves of natural gardening that periodically sweep this country. Yet nowhere are they more beautiful than in their wild forms, mixed with native grasses such as big blue stem (*Andropogon*

gerardii) and Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) on the edge of an oak wood.

Wisconsin's post-glacial terrain has similarities with Washington state's. Although not mountainous, it is undulating and hilly, potholed with lakes and braided with rivers. The southwestern part of the state, where Madison is situated, stands at a transitional zone between the eastern-forest biome and the prairie biome of the Midwest. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the Curtis Prairie, where the invasion of woody species—beyond a scattering of burr oaks (*Quercus macrocarpa*)—is problematic: New Jersey tea (*Ceanothus americanus*) and two species of shrubby dogwood (*Cornus sericea* and *C. racemosa*) must be regularly removed from this grassland so they do not turn it into a forest.

Wisconsin—known as “America’s Dairyland” and famous for red barns and black-and-white cows—once was covered in forests. With a gentler topography than Washington state, Wisconsin’s timber was easily and readily harvested, leaving depleted what had been vast tracts of diverse forest communities rich in wildlife and woody and herbaceous plants. U.W.-Madison Arboretum is recreating many of these complex forest communities. The Wingra Oak Savannah, an open grove of burr oaks (*Quercus macrocarpa*), is still in the process of having non-native trees, shrubs and herbaceous weeds replaced with grassland species. The Noe Woods, a 51-acre grove of white (*Quercus alba*) and black oaks (*Q. velutina*), is a type of woods that typically developed after settlement put an end to the cyclic regeneration that results from natural fires. It hosts the park’s oldest trees: several oaks over 150 years old. The 52-acre Wingra Woods is slowly being converted into a typical northern Wisconsin deciduous forest dominated by sugar maples (*Acer saccharum*), yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*) and hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*). In this woods, and the adjacent 28-acre Gallistel Woods, are found ancient burial and effigy mounds belonging to a Native



ABOVE: Artwork in the Curtis Prairie.

INSET: Goldenrod massed against the stone walls of the Arboretum's Visitor Center.

American culture that flourished there between 650 to 1200 years ago. Some mounds represent birds or panthers, while others are simply geometric. These mounds still hold mystery for casual visitors, as well as for the archeologists who study them.

Gallistel Woods is representative of the woodland communities of southeastern Wisconsin that are dominated by sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), basswood (*Tilia americana*) and American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*). These are the woods of my youth; I still remember the joy, after a long and bitter winter, of seeing bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), yellow dog tooth violet (*Erythronium americanum*) and white baneberry (*Actaea pachypoda*) pushing out of the leaf litter to take advantage of sun beneath the leafless trees. That some

of these plants can be found in my clients' gardens here in the Pacific Northwest is evidence of the lasting impression these forests had on me.

One of the first forest re-creation projects at the Arboretum—the Leopold Pines—was planted in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps, under the direction of Aldo Leopold himself. It is a tall stand of white pine (*Pinus strobus*) and red pine (*P. resinosa*) that recreates the primary coniferous forests of the upper Midwest before they were logged. An understory of red maple (*Acer rubrum*) and paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*) seems to thrive under Leopold's pines, but experiments



Split burs—or nut casings—of the American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*).

to establish a lower understory of northern shrubs and ground-layering plants have met with limited success. (Ecologists now hope to create an “old-growth effect” in a relatively short time by cutting down selected trees.)

The 14-acre Boreal Forest is an attempt to recreate the forests, dominated by black spruce (*Picea mariana*) and balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*), which cover great expanses of Canada and dip into the northern-most regions of Wisconsin.

Water Features in the Arboretum

Of the 65,503 square miles of Wisconsin, 11,190 are water. The state borders one of the largest bodies of fresh water on the planet, Lake Michigan, and touches another, Lake Superior. It has the famous Mississippi River as its western boundary line and is covered with countless

smaller lakes and rivers. The Arboretum's many representative wetlands—fed by storm water runoff from the surrounding 4600-acre urban water shed—include ponds, marshes, creeks and Lake Wingra. Of the wetlands, Wingra Marsh remains relatively intact, while other wetlands contain many exotic species. These protected wetlands, once favored hunting grounds of Native Americans as well as early settlers, now attract birders—especially during the migratory seasons of spring and fall. They also play host to one of this continent's more dramatic birds, the Sandhill crane.

The most recent development, the Wisconsin Native Plant Garden, was begun in 2001 in conjunction with an expansion of the Visitors' Center. This four-acre garden surrounds the Center and represents over 500 plants from around the state, grown in



ABOVE: Mixed Shrubs in the Longenecker Horticultural Gardens. **INSET:** *Liatris spicata* in one of the Arboretum's wildflower meadows. (Photo courtesy of the University of Wisconsin Archives)

15 distinct plant communities. As part of the ornamental gardens of the Arboretum, it serves to encourage use of native plants in home landscapes, both for their intrinsic beauty and for creating habitat for wildlife.

Visionary Goals

The fact that this impressive Arboretum is sustained by a relatively small community (there are only slightly over 230,000 inhabitants in Madison) is a testament to its visionary goals and its ability to inspire the public. Many visitors simply enjoy the 20 miles of trails for biking, jogging, skiing or snowshoeing, while university students and garden and nature enthusiasts are drawn to the well-maintained horticultural collections and ecosystem projects.

With only one full-time and one half-time gardener for the ornamental collections, and three field staffers for the remaining 1200

acres, much of the Arboretum's maintenance falls on its 700 volunteers, who play indispensable roles in helping with educational programs, fundraising and creating and maintaining the Arboretum's Web site.

It is estimated that the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum is home to the species of over 650 native plants, 250 birds, 29 fish, 35 mammals, 26 amphibians and at least 15,000 types of insects. Add to these numbers its many visitors, staff and volunteers, and the very existence of the Arboretum proves that no tree—like no man—is an island. ~

DANIEL MOUNT received a BSLS-Botany degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He currently works as an estate gardener in the Seattle area. Read his thoughts on gardening on his blog danielmountgarden.blogspot.com.

The Arboretum Bulletin

The Mulligan Years

BY BRIAN R. THOMPSON

BRIAN O. MULLIGAN was director of the Arboretum from October 1946 until his retirement in June 1972. As might be expected of such a long tenure, he had a great impact on all matters related to the Arboretum, including the "Bulletin," which he edited for many years. Two "Bulletin" authors, who worked closely with him, highlight his contributions (excerpted from the Fall 1985 issue):

His guidance widened the scope of the subject matter chosen and suggested valuable authors unknown to the rest of us. The impressive list of his own contributions to the Arboretum Bulletin attests to his ability as a writer, researcher and photographer.

—FRANCES K. ROBERSON

...Brian has greatly influenced the character of this publication and has contributed numerous important articles reviewing groups of genera of families represented in the Arboretum's collections. He has enticed our readers with descriptions of plants not usually grown in local gardens.

—JAN PIRZIO-BIROLI

In reviewing the 100 or more issues of this era's "Bulletin," the changes referred to by these authors are not immediately obvious in its appearance. Four issues came out like clockwork every year in the same dimen-

sions that we know today (a practice that began in 1942). Glossy covers, tinted to the season, gave way to tinted matte photographs in 1957. The cover masthead slowly evolved. Inside, the use of photographs gradually increased, with the first full-color photos appearing by the early 1970s.

The changes came most apparently in the content, a process that has made the "Bulletin" well-known and well regarded around the world, as I learned firsthand on a visit to Edinburgh—see the first part of this history in the Spring 2010 "Bulletin." This article continues that history with some of the highlights of the Mulligan era.

A Businesslike Approach

Mulligan's first contribution to the "Bulletin"—in the Spring 1947 issue—sets the tone for all future entries by its simple title, "Winter Work at the Arboretum." He begins, "The principal aims since my arrival here in the latter part of October, 1946, have been..." and continues with a description of two projects to improve access and views of key collections. The article's tone is very businesslike and very organized.

These traits are particularly clear in his annual reports, detailing the collections activities and acquisitions of each year, along with plans for the next. Reading such reports years later, the detail cited in them really impresses me. In particular, Mulligan's notes on the many books he acquired for

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Brian Mulligan would have made an excellent librarian, as he understood not only the need for high quality writing, but for the means to retrieve that important information later. Soon after he took on the editorship of the "Bulletin" in the mid-1950s, he devoted an entire issue (Summer 1955) to a comprehensive index of the "Bulletin" by both author and subject—from when it was established in 1942, through 1954. This practice of publishing whole-issue, multi-year indexes continued in 1965 and 1973.

Scholarship and More

Mulligan, while clearly learned in matters of horticulture (he had a Royal Horticultural Society national diploma in horticulture from Wisley), proved he understood the big picture of being the director of a community asset, too. This is eloquently expressed in the Fall 1949 article, "Arboreta and Their Relation to the Community and Individual."

His scholarship can be seen in "Rose Species" (I: Spring 1948; II: Fall 1948), a review of the genus from a taxonomic perspective, followed by a horticultural essay on the best species for Pacific Northwest gardens. But I found his writing at its best in his plant-informed travelogues, especially "Some Arboreta and Gardens of N.W. Europe in 1960," a four-part series that held readers' attention from its debut in the Winter 1960 issue to its conclusion a year later.

Mulligan's enthusiasm is clear in the narrative of his visit to Bodnant Garden in Wales. "...and thence by an excellent train...an hour or so to Llandudno Junction, where any lover of gardens will promptly descend and by bus or taxi proceed a few

miles up the Conway River valley to Bodnant." He continues, "It should on no account be missed by anyone touring British gardens, since it contains so many elements of the greatest of these..."

His influence continued well beyond 1972 as he remained a major contributor to the "Bulletin" during his 24 years as a volunteer after retirement. These articles include descriptions of seed-gathering expeditions and another trip diary—"A Busman's Holiday in Europe: Flowers and Gardens in the Spring"—that extend from the Fall 1973 through Summer 1974 issues. One could spend many happy hours with just the Mulligan articles of the "Bulletin"!

Joseph A. Witt

Joseph Witt, curator of the Arboretum, contributed over 100 articles to the "Bulletin" beginning in 1955 until his untimely death in 1984. Most of these are single-plant highlights (or "Spotlights," as he called them), descriptions of the development of the collections, and assessments of the impact of major weather events. But he also traveled and wrote a lively account in "A Professional Horticultural Exploration of England and Scotland," a four-part series that spanned the issues published between Winter 1966 and Fall 1967.

"On the way down the River Tay...I went into that semi-somnolent condition typical of bus riders, when I suddenly realized I was seeing something very familiar. The bus might have been traveling along one of our Western Washington rivers! The forests were of Douglas fir, western hemlock with a few western red cedars thrown in...just like home. [...] My reverie was broken and I was snapped back to Scotland when we were stopped by a local

policeman to allow a small parade led by kilted pipers cross the highway."

Other Notable Series

C. Frank Brockman of the University of Washington's College of Forestry contributed a fine series on the native trees of the Pacific Northwest. From the Spring 1952 through Summer 1967 issues, over 20 profiles were published and typically included a one- to two-page description of the notable features, range and natural history of each species, along with a full page photograph.

"Early Plant Explorers of the Pacific Northwest" was a series introduced in the Spring 1950 "Bulletin" by Charles W. Smith, Librarian Emeritus of the University of Washington, who described it as "Papers...written about the men who first discovered and described our indigenous plants."

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Beginning with Archibald Menzies, these biographical sketches cover the period from the late-18th to the mid-19th centuries.

Not all the articles are about individuals: The final installment (in Winter 1952) on the Pacific Coast Railway surveys of 1853-54 highlights the botanical contributions of the many individuals involved in five separate surveys of potential routes for a Mississippi River to Pacific Coast railway. Several authors contributed to the series, and the writing styles vary, but this is another example of the fine scholarship the "Bulletin" has provided to its readership over the years.

Special Issues

What is the most popular genus in the Arboretum? If you were to base your answer on the number of articles alone, the hands-down winner is *Rhododendron*. This admiration reaches its peak in the Spring 1961 issue, which features articles by a half dozen local experts on special types of the

FALL 1959

plant and the art and science of hybridizing new introductions.

Many issues during the Mulligan years included several articles on a single plant group or on another special topic. Issues focused on conifers (Winter 1949), junipers (Spring 1957), oaks (Fall 1958) and hollies (Winter 1961). Each set of articles remains of significant value today to readers interested in these plants.

Other themed issues—typically titled a "Symposium"—include "Good Trees for Small Pacific Northwest Gardens" (Fall 1957), "Fall Color" (Fall 1961) and "Spring Flowering Trees" (Spring 1963). In the Spring 1970 issue, the focus is on birds of the Arboretum, while the Japanese Garden is featured in both the Winter 1960 issue—to celebrate the Garden's opening—and in the Summer 1971 issue, to celebrate its 10th anniversary.

25th Anniversary

I found the most fascinating of these themed "Bulletins" to be a series of four,

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beginning with the Winter 1959 issue, which celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Arboretum. The anonymous introduction (most likely penned by Brian Mulligan, who was editor at the time) explains "This issue of the 'Bulletin' therefore differs considerably from the norm. In it we endeavor to show you, our readers, some of the problems which beset our childhood and youth; then, through several pairs of eyes, what kind of an adult we have become..."

Describing the "adult" Arboretum is accomplished very well in the first issue by a cross-section of academic and community members. The next three "Bulletins" recall the Arboretum's childhood and youth by sampling articles from the first 25 years of the magazine's publication, arranged by plant subject. The purpose, according to the introduction, is to offer "the wealth of data and opinion which has been accumulated..."

It's very impressive. All the major plantings in the Arboretum get their due attention, especially in the articles drawn from the earlier issues of the "Bulletin"—articles which by this time would have been hard to find. Best, these quotations summarize and celebrate not only the early history of the "Bulletin," but that of the Arboretum as a whole. ~

The author again thanks Rebecca Alexander and Kathy Lantz of the Miller Library for their help in research for this article.

BRIAN R. THOMPSON is the manager and curator of the Elisabeth C. Miller Library, University of Washington Botanic Gardens and a member of the "Bulletin" Editorial Board.

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